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## BULLETIN

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### Community Planning for the Care of Children of Employed Mothers\*

GRACE A. REEDER

Director, Bureau of Child Welfare, New York State Department of Social Welfare

OF ALL the dislocations of normal living that are inevitable to a nation at war, those affecting the lives of children are most difficult to solve and probably the most far reaching. If we can win the war and lose the peace, as we are frequently told, we can also win the war on the foreign front and lose it on the home front. Under peace-time conditions we aim to bring the life of under-privileged children to a well-established standard of what is best for them in fairly stabilized communities. But in wartime we must contend with definitely different and, in many cases, lower standards in communities that are changing so rapidly that the old sense of stability is often completely gone. The taking of mothers out of their homes is in itself a blow to the best interests of the children, and when these women are working in war industries, the conditions of their work constitute a further strain on the relationship between mother and child. The pressure upon manufacturers to turn out war products is so great that it is practically impossible for them to give special consideration to their women workers or even to those who are mothers of small children. The women must work in rotating shifts, just as the men do, and so the long fight to save women from night labor appears to have been lost for the time being. In this emergency the interests of the home are in conflict with factory hours and conditions, and in our programs we must endeavor to preserve whatever we can of family life for children. It is, therefore, of great importance that we should make all our plans in the full awareness of an unprecedented crisis in the well-being of children, which will require flexibility of thinking, willingness to discard past standards no longer workable, and the utmost effort and co-operation on the part of both volunteer and trained social workers.

Miss Emma Lundberg, in her pamphlet, "A Com-

munity Program of Day Care for Children," published recently by the Children's Bureau, has given a clear picture of the need for co-ordination in the planning of such a program as we are considering. At the outset, several general considerations should be borne in mind, which are summed up by Miss Lundberg as follows:

"A program of day care for children cannot be developed as a separate program, but must be related to other services providing health protection, educational opportunities, recreation and social service. Federal agencies carrying programs of co-operation with the states in extending and strengthening these basic services are planning together concerning the special problems of care and supervision of children whose mothers are employed in defense areas and methods of utilizing to the fullest extent the Federal and State resources available within the local communities. However, because no two communities have exactly the same problem, primary responsibility for initiating and directing programs in the emergency must remain with the local communities."

Here, however, certain obstacles may arise, such as a failure on the part of the local community to realize that the need is imperative, particularly in those cases where it appears almost overnight. There is sometimes a feeling that, because the local defense industry is paying high wages, the employed mothers should make their own provision for the care of their children. Sometimes, also, through lack of imagination as to the magnitude of the growing problem, a community sits smugly back and says, "We have enough existing social agencies in this city to handle the situation." These attitudes have occurred in the state in which I live and must surely be developing in other parts of the country. At this point a State Committee or branch of a State War Council can play an important part, both in furnishing local communities with information as to industrial expansion and in consultation on how to develop a program. This kind of service may be speeded up if the State Committee has a field staff which can meet with local

\* Paper given at the National Conference of Social Work, New Orleans, Louisiana, May 11, 1942.

groups and help them organize. The State field staff may diplomatically suggest bringing together groups in the community which are competing in assuming leadership for the local program. If the State Committee has set up certain recommended procedures for local organization and participation of interested groups in the community which can be given to communities, some of the problems of clashing personalities may be obviated. If the different groups which should be represented on a local committee have been specifically mentioned in such a recommended procedure, it is not so easy for a local committee to ignore the need for board representation from all interested local agencies.

In addition to these functions, a State Committee can offer valuable assistance to local communities in making available to them information as to proposed expansion of industrial plants and probable resulting expansion of employment of women.

The work of a local committee on day care of children may be outlined as follows (the procedure will be dependent to some extent upon local conditions):

1. Determining the effect of defense industries and other emergency conditions on the welfare of children in the community and the adequacy of local resources to meet the situation as found to exist.
2. Making plans for the full utilization of existing facilities and their expansion where desirable.
3. Establishing such supplemental facilities for the day care of children as may be needed where existing facilities are inadequate and cannot be satisfactorily expanded.
4. Sponsoring a program for the training of volunteers in child care.

#### *Determining Needs of the Children of Working Mothers*

In communities where there have been some co-ordination and community planning, the task of planning for the day care of children is somewhat simplified. But even in such communities agency programs are geared to meet only peace-time needs and many show inflexibility as to changing their policies and procedures to meet the new situations. In one small city which had become a defense center, two of the local children's institutions reported that they had had many requests for day care of children. The institutions made no further inquiry, did not know what happened to the applicants, and showed no interest in or feeling of responsibility for meeting the need for this type of care. There is no day nursery in

this city, and neither institution is running to capacity. Surely the local committee for child care has a responsibility for arousing community agencies to a consideration of changing policies to meet changing needs.

There seems to be general agreement that a survey should be made in each defense area to determine the extent of the need for day care facilities as a preliminary to community planning. The survey should give as complete a picture as possible of present and future needs of day care for children and of the adequacy of existing facilities to meet these needs.

The interest of the superintendent of schools should be enlisted and his co-operation secured in surveying the need for day care. In some communities a questionnaire filled out by school children has been used as the first step in a survey of the number of children of working mothers needing care. In other places, questionnaires to be filled out by parents have been sent home by school children and the information returned to the schools. In still other communities the information has been secured through questionnaires filled out by teachers. In any case it is essential that the survey be conducted by workers who have had professional training in handling case situations and understanding family problems.

As a preparation to the circulation of any questionnaire to be used in the survey, the local committee should take the responsibility for planning newspaper publicity, extending over a period of a week or more, to explain the purpose of the survey.

To supplement professional workers volunteers may be used in conducting a survey, but careful training and supervision should be given to avoid their attempting to delve into problems requiring skill and training. They must be people who understand the child, who recognize the importance of his background to him no matter how it may differ or deviate from acceptable patterns and who understand the need to keep his home ties intact and secure. Volunteers should be advised that their approach and the manner and type of questions asked should be such as to put the person interviewed at ease. If there is evidence of definite resentment or resistance when the information desired is requested, the interview should not be continued and the situation should be brought to the attention of the social worker. The need to keep stories of children confidential and to maintain standards of professional ethics as in social work should be emphasized.

If the questionnaire filled out by school children is used, it should be supplemented by a list compiled by teachers of the names of those children whose reports

indicate that they are not receiving proper care, together with the names and addresses of their parents. These families should be cleared with the Social Service Exchange and, where there is a question as to whether proper care and protection are being provided, follow-up contacts should be made with the families by a social agency through its staff.

In order to have a complete picture of the number of women employed, information should be secured from the U. S. Government Employment Service and from all private employment agencies, to ascertain the number employed in defense and non-defense industries. This is important, since many women now working as waitresses and in retail establishments and elsewhere, have replaced men who have gone into war industry employment or in the various branches of the Service.

In some communities a questionnaire or application form to be filled out by the employed mother has been used and supplies of these blanks have been made available to the mothers at health centers, employment offices, elementary schools and social agencies. In other communities the personnel offices of industrial plants have furnished councils of social agencies with information as to employed mothers, and in some defense areas registration centers have been set up where employed mothers may register their need for day care. Objection has been raised to the latter unless the registration is set up as a part of the counselling service advocated in the bulletins of the U. S. Children's Bureau. The object of this counselling service is to assist parents in making plans which will safeguard family life and make adequate provision for the health and welfare of both parents and children. If the center for registration only is set up, mothers with very young children may be encouraged to take jobs without having help in understanding an infant's need of its mother and the dangers of attempting to substitute another form of security.

#### *Appraisal of Existing Facilities for Care of Children*

Having obtained the extent of the need for day care in a given community, the next step is to survey the present facilities and the possibilities of expanding them if necessary. Information on these two points should be secured from day nurseries, nursery schools, agencies providing foster day care and house-keeper service and also agencies providing after-school activities. Nurseries, nursery schools and children's institutions are especially important because they have facilities for serving meals; and children's institutions have infirmary and sometimes

hospital accommodations, which are of vital importance in planning the medical part of a program for children of employed mothers. In the case of such organizations as are privately administered, it may be necessary for the local child care committee to take up the possibilities of expansion of facilities, not only with executives but with boards of directors. Some of these, alas! may be lacking in imagination or interest in changing a program which has been in existence many years.

This appraisal of present facilities and consideration of whether they can be adapted or expanded to meet the existing and future needs, requires a fundamental realization of the values for which we are fighting and a real understanding of the importance of preserving family relationships. It is a paradoxical situation—we are taking women out of their homes, away from their children, to help win a war to assure a better world for these same children. The soundness of what we do in providing for the care of these children is, therefore, of paramount importance.

Our desire to further the development of some particular form of care, however desirable, as, for instance, nursery school programs, must not lead us to regimentation or inflexibility in our thinking. A parent should have the right and the responsibility to work out plans for his or her children with or without help from others. If a child is happy and secure in the home of a grandparent or other relative, it is not the community's job to urge his attendance at a day care center which it has provided.

Keeping always in mind the need of a child for security within a family group, for love, warmth and understanding from adults and continuity of relationships, we shall need to utilize all the ingenuity at our command to preserve these values for him. Whether we like it or not, our child care program must be geared to the hours of employment of mothers in a given community. For example, if, as in many defense plants, the shifts run approximately as follows: 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., the problem of offering care for children on a day basis is indeed a difficult one. The situation is further complicated by the fact that in many plants employees are changed from one shift to another, i.e., shifts are rotated every two or three weeks. In some places, employers have been asked to arrange for employed women with children to be assigned to the day shifts only. Invariably the reply is that the employer must be concerned only with completing war contracts and so cannot consider the individual needs of any one group of em-

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## Recent Developments in Home Finding\*

HENRIETTA L. GORDON

DURING the past several months difficulties in finding a sufficient number of adequate foster homes had increased to such a degree as to threaten the placement program. Agencies all over the country were reporting a more than 50 per cent decrease in the number of applications from would-be foster parents.

In an effort to trace the probable cause of this shortage, we communicated with a number of agencies in various types of communities. Their replies trace the unprecedented difficulty in home finding today directly to the war. Reports read as follows:

1. A serious housing shortage necessitates families moving into smaller quarters, allowing for no additions to the family.
2. The call to active service of the younger men is bringing young married daughters and daughters-in-law back to the parental homes.
3. Because of the possibility of the father of the family finding a job in the new area to which the family will have to move, some folks are hesitant about applying for children.
4. With day and night shifts of work in war industries, sleeping arrangements are disturbed, activities of children must be curbed while night workers sleep during the day. Such families hesitate to board children.
5. There are better jobs available now, so that those women who wish to earn money are availing themselves of those opportunities rather than boarding children.
6. Childless couples are hesitant to take children into the home because of the greater possibility of the man being called into active service.
7. Community dislocation added to family disintegration resulting from our precipitated war activity has affected communities' attitudes towards taking children.

These conditions affect not only the flow of new homes, but the stability of some of the homes already in use, particularly where the placement is recent so that the ties between the child and the foster family are not yet deeply rooted. In some such instances the exigencies of the war are resulting in foster families asking to be relieved of children who have already been placed with them. This is particularly true, as one agency puts it, where the foster parents have, during the depression years, suffered serious financial deprivation and depletion of basic necessities in personal and household equipment. Mothers in such families are most eager to avail themselves of any opportunity to earn some money. This agency adds: "It is significant that the return of children for such reasons does not happen where the children had been placed for some time, so that they have made a place for themselves in a foster family."

The need to find more foster homes is the more pressing because those very factors which have caused a decrease in the numbers of applications by

prospective foster parents have been bringing larger numbers of parents to ask for the placement of their children. Fortunately the same agencies believe this shortage of foster homes is probably a temporary condition, reflecting a hysterical reaction of fear of the effects of sudden national mobilization for war, and an all too narrow and all too literal interpretation of our President's statement that we have one great task before us, "to win the war." An interpretation\* to the community that will enable them to recognize as a vital part of the war program a program of care of children who cannot be cared for by their own families is overdue.

"The validity of such interpretation may be gauged by what some of the recent would-be foster mothers state in applications," writes us one agency, which finds that while there seem to be fewer women who believe that the care of children at home is a career, there are still enough, if they could be reached, who would want to take children because "we want to do something for our country."

We need also to scrutinize our criteria of usable foster homes and re-examine our methods of home finding. At several of the League's regional conferences, workers in child placing agencies have expressed their concern through such questions as, can we still adhere to what we believe are sound home finding principles, which will result in sound placement practices while in the choice of homes we adjust and make concessions to the present reality? What are objective criteria of a usable home? Such concern is understandable. For years we have been painstakingly developing standards which served the case worker in her evaluation, and the licensing agencies in their responsibility. For example, it has come to be recognized that a foster home can best serve one family group, whether that be of one or several children; that a child should not be placed in the home of a widow except when the physical, social or personality difficulties require the special gifts of the foster home. Foster family care is the way of giving a child experience in normal family life and, therefore, a father should be present in the home. By and large a child should not be placed in a home in which the father works at night and sleeps during the day because a child's freedom must of necessity be curtailed. Each child, where possible, should have a room to himself, certainly at least a bed to himself.

\* Presented at National Conference, May, 1942—See paper on Interpretation, by B. A. Roloff, *Channels*, July, 1942.

Generally, neither too young nor too old foster parents should be selected. Generally, children who have interested parents had best not be placed in homes of childless couples. And there is validity for these standards.

Recently, however, in an effort to determine which types of homes had been most usable, the staff of the Children's Aid Society of Pennsylvania studied the foster homes which they felt had given them the most helpful service during the past several years. Briefly, this report\* points up that whereas there had been question as to the use of the homes of widows, some of the homes selected as having been especially good were those of widows. In some instances there were older sons in the homes which partially compensated for the lack of a father. Some homes of childless couples had served admirably for children with interested parents. The satisfactory way in which these homes functioned indicates that we cannot be rigid in the application of principles. The total situation must be evaluated. Similarly, the homes of some older foster parents, which theoretically we had considered generally unwise to use, have been found in instances to be serving decidedly adequately. The agency has used its ingenuity to find ways of supplementing the lacks in these particular homes. So it was found to be with the homes of younger foster parents, as described in the study just referred to:

"In our study we discovered that some of our very best homes came to us in their twenties. Most of these were not recent acquisitions, however, which gave us pause for thought. The scarcity of recently acquired young homes in this selected group seemed to be due to two factors: that we were not accepting as many younger people and that many of those opened within the last few years would not as yet fall into this classification of exceptionally good homes. The significant inference here is that, with the supporting help of the agency, young foster parents can become increasingly valuable."

This applies not only to young foster parents but to work with all foster parents, as the next statement clearly shows:

"When we stop to think of it, we realize it is so natural for foster parents to grow along with foster children as they would with their own, providing that they are endowed with this capacity in the first place. But because this parent-child relationship is not an entirely natural one, we must be very aware of the responsibility the agency has to assume in working with these less mature and less experienced families, and be ready to contribute additional help."

This means that foster homes must be wisely selected and their potentialities thoughtfully developed. In selecting homes and in applying standards of health, physical care, educational and social opportunities available for all children in the community, it should be borne in mind that children need-

\* Complete statement in "Child Care and Protection Supplement," Child Welfare League of America, April, 1942.

ing care away from their homes have special needs because of that very fact and because of the difficulties they have experienced. However, neither the children nor the caseworkers can escape the realities of the situation.

As women are called into industry, there may be fewer homes available. Children of more than one family may have to be placed in some foster homes. We are indeed faced with a rationing of physical and emotional necessities of life.

Standards of practice that we have considered questionable must also be evaluated in terms of prevailing community facilities. The goal of home finding has been to find for those children who cannot live with their own families, a substitute family where the standard of living is comparable with good standards in the community in which the child is to be placed, standards that would give him as good care as the community can make available. Obviously, if most of our children will be living in homes where the father or another member of the family will be sleeping during the day, or where children, because of housing shortage, will not be able to have a room to themselves, or where in a large number of families married daughters may be returning home because their husbands are in the armed forces—if this will be the community pattern of living during the period of the war, we cannot give children needing foster care any more than we have for all the community's children. It is important to see that realistically, and to recognize that under these circumstances it does not mean a lowering of standards of service. To quote from the agencies' reports: "Homes will be selected if their physical standards are acceptable in terms of the community's situation, if the foster family's personalities and feelings for children will be found to be such as will give the child both the necessary direction and the necessary freedom for growth. This will include ability of the foster parent to work within the structure of the agency."

The worker's understanding of these inescapable realities will be a cardinal factor in her ability to help the child, his family and the foster family deal with them. It will also help her deal with such troubling problems as, "If a child is doing well, and we feel that he cannot stand the competition of another child, will we be able to leave his foster home to him, or will this become an impractical luxury?" The case worker will not become inflexible in expecting all children to adjust to a "new standard." The individual, unique needs of each child will continue to be the basis for decisions. Some children may be placed

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**BULLETIN**

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Henrietta L. Gordon, *Editor*

**The Bulletin is in large measure a Forum for discussion in print of child welfare problems. Endorsement does not necessarily go with the printing of opinions expressed over a signature.**

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**War Hits Our Children**

EACH day adds to the number of children in the United States being hurt by war. A Chinese, Japanese, British or German child, looking grimly at his thinning dinner ration, might readily say, "War always hits children: it hit me long ago. My father was killed in 1940."

Even with nine months of war there are boys and girls in the United States whose fathers have been killed in action. Every big battle will add to our list of war orphans. Likewise, every large war appropriation will disrupt families because it draws mothers as well as fathers into the feverish expansion of war industry. Every large concentration of men creates unwholesome moral hazards. "Twice as many children of unmarried mothers under care," is the report from two child welfare agencies located at far corners of the country, but both comparing recent loads with the loads carried one year before.

Children have suffered in and after all wars. It was an Indian massacre in 1729 which led citizens to bring orphaned children to the nuns in the Ursuline Convent in New Orleans. After our own Civil War a statistician might have plotted a correlation between the number of Pennsylvania soldiers killed and the number of beds provided in the numerous Homes for the Friendless and other institutions for the orphans of soldiers and sailors. These were founded after the Civil War and the Spanish-American War and World War I helped to keep the supply of orphans and half-orphans flowing. Good work done by the American Legion, the Child Welfare League of America and other friends of children prevented the development of numerous orphanages after the last war. Some institutional care was needed but there were enough institutions to supply it. The greater need was for the development of foster home care.

The number of children needing foster care in institutions or family homes, those requiring pro-

tective service, those needing day care or improved care in their own homes, is sure to grow as this war continues. If a father in the Army or Navy receiving only \$60 monthly was earning \$180 monthly before entering the service, the family income will be cut by one-half or more, according to the number of his dependents. The present provisions for allotments, supplemented by allowances from the government, liberal as they are, will leave the soldier's wife with a greatly reduced income and too often will lead her to seek employment away from her home.

The Child Welfare League, in dealing with these subjects, is closely in touch with its network of member and affiliate agencies, and never before have we had so much interchange of services between members. This closer association of our agencies has greatly enriched the information, consultation and publication services coming from our national office and has made our regional conferences more vital than ever.

As the war moves on, as appeals for funds must be pressed and additional services provided, the League will continue its persistent search for data which will guide local communities and agencies. It is eager to receive voluntary reports summarizing situations where the immediate problems of children can be traced to battles, or enrollment in military or industrial service.

—HOWARD W. HOPKIRK

**NEWS FROM THE FIELD****A United Homefinding Campaign**

Seventeen agencies caring for Catholic, Jewish and Protestant children have begun a united effort to find 5,000 or more new family boarding homes for dependent and neglected children of Greater New York. The campaign, which will last for several months, was launched at a luncheon, under the sponsorship of the New York City Committee on Child Welfare of the State Charities Aid Association. The speakers were Marshall Field, Chairman of the Committee, who presided; Miss Katharine F. Lenroot, Chief of the Federal Children's Bureau; William Hodson, Commissioner of Public Welfare of New York City, and three representatives of participating agencies.

All of the speakers stressed the fact that persons taking needy children into their homes for foster care were not only helping the children, but making a contribution to the war effort on the home front. It is a

patriotic service of the first order. They declared, "Children are Social Priority Number 1 in wartime, as in peace."

"I am sure that the whole community will applaud the wisdom and efficiency of the three religious denominations united in a concerted effort and making only one campaign grow where otherwise there might have been three," said Mr. Field.

Miss Katharine Lenroot pointed out that the need of many more homes for foster care of children was not confined to New York. She said further that foster home care of children is an essential service in wartime. She declared: "On the home front we have two major tasks: (1) To produce as much and as rapidly as possible the war materials necessary and (2) the care and training of the children of the nation to carry on a free society in the post-war world."

\* \* \* \*

"Children are ordinarily cared for in their own homes, the influence and nurturing care of parents being reinforced as the child grows older by teachers and those with whom the child comes in contact in the community. For many thousands of children, however, care in their own homes by their own parents is unavailable through death, illness, incapacity, or other circumstances. For these children the nearest possible substitute for home care must be found. A great reliance must be placed upon the willingness of other homes to open their doors to the child who otherwise could not know the development of individual personality which home life brings."

William Hodson said in part: "The organizations co-operating with the New York City Committee on Child Welfare are rendering a distinct wartime service to this community by campaigning for more boarding homes for children who need them. When children are deprived of their homes and of parental care through unhappy circumstances it is a source of real satisfaction to know that there are foster homes and foster mothers and fathers who will take them in and give them the individual attention they ought to have. We are fighting this war to preserve family life and all that it means in the care and upbringing of children. It would be tragedy indeed if, in the midst of the conflict, we did not have a sufficient number of boarding homes which could shelter children whose family life has been interrupted or destroyed.

In the first 25 days of the campaign, 1,745 would-be foster parents responded to the call. These requests for further information are distributed to three designated centers representing each of the religious groups. Each in turn distributes those

among the participating agencies in their group. Many appointments for the first interview have already been made.

## New League Members

The following agencies have been admitted to Accredited Membership in the Child Welfare League of America:

Child Welfare Division,  
State Department of Public Welfare,  
State Annex, Denver, Colorado,  
Miss Marie Smith, Director.

Michigan Children's Institute,  
1447 Washington Heights,  
Ann Arbor, Michigan,  
Mr. C. F. Ramsay, Superintendent.

Several other applications for membership are under consideration.

## Available for Circulation to League Members, Affiliates and Associates

The News-Letter of the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers —

*July, 1942:*

Use of Psychiatric Understanding to Implement a Professional Use of Authority with:

The Adult Seeking Help with his Social Problems, Beatrice Z. Levey.  
The Troubled Adolescent, Evelyn K. Gutfeld.  
The Child Needing Placement, Margaret Mink.

*Summer, 1942:*

Reflections of a War Situation on the Child Population:

1. Health Needs of Children in Time of War, Katherine Bain, M.D.
2. Reflections of War in the Adjustment of Children, Martha W. MacDonald, M.D.

The Function of the Psychiatric Social Worker in a Child Guidance Clinic, Ruth Walton.

**THE FATHER GETS WORSE: A CHILD GUIDANCE PROBLEM**, Mildred Burgum, American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, July, 1942.

**CHARACTER STRUCTURE OF A REJECTED CHILD**, Frederick Rosenheim, American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, July, 1942.

**CHILD WELFARE SERVICES AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION**, Norris E. Class, Social Service Review, June, 1942.

**PSYCHIATRIC ASPECTS OF CIVILIAN MORALE**, Family Welfare Association of America, 1942. Price, 50 cents.

**EFFECTS OF WAR ON CANADIAN SOCIAL SERVICES**, Martin M. Cohn, The Family, July, 1942.

**CASE WORK SERVICES IN AN A.D.C. PROGRAM**, Eileen Blackey, The Family, July, 1942.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY ON SOCIAL CASE WORK AND WARTIME PROBLEMS**, The Family, July, 1942.

**WHILE MOTHERS WORK**, Kathryn Close, Survey Midmonthly, July, 1942.

## THE BOARD MEMBER SPEAKS—

### The Responsibility of Board Members for Children in Wartime

I AM very glad of this opportunity to speak directly to fellow board members of children's agencies, both public and private, throughout the country. We are aware that these days have brought us added and grave responsibilities. We were conscious two years ago that the war that then seemed probable might well challenge us to increased efforts to provide for the children of America the security and protection which are the heritage of every child in a democracy. The passage of the Lease-Lend Bill in itself affected almost every hamlet in America, with the resulting pressures on all our production facilities. But if problems of the pre-war period increased our responsibilities as the guardians of children, the history-making event of Sunday morning, December 7, added to them a hundred-fold.

While we do not know in detail of the family and child welfare programs of the Axis powers, we have enough information at hand to assure us that they have made provisions for the families and children of soldiers and industrial workers.

What of the situation in our own country? Remember that in fighting this war we have taken a pledge to guarantee the freedom and the security of oppressed peoples in all parts of the world. It would be not only ironic, but fatal for us to forget that the application of that pledge begins at home. It begins in the child welfare agency of which you are a board member, and with the League of which I am a board member. The situation on our own child welfare front leaves much to be desired. For example, in one defense county in a western state one public health nurse is serving a population of 4,500. The prenatal cases for which she is responsible make it impossible for her to handle them. Child health supervision is almost non-existent, and no well-child conferences have been held for a year because of the lack of medical services. In a nearby county child welfare workers report a similar situation.

One of the large urban areas of the country has reported recently that juvenile delinquency has increased nearly forty per cent in the last year. Hundreds of communities report that unmarried mothers and their children are in urgent need of community help that is not forthcoming. In one of the largest states of the nation it is reported that at least one-third of the six thousand children in institutions in that state were removed from their own homes because of poverty. The League long ago took

the stand that no child should be removed from his home for poverty alone, but the exigencies of war mean that this basic principle is being violated in many cases. In a mid-Western county, where the population is normally 54,000, there was an estimated increase of 33,000 during the last year and there are two child welfare workers available for the entire county.

While enlisted men are ready and eager to provide for their wives and children to the utmost of their ability, it is essential to increase our facilities for aiding in these cases wherever help is needed. Reports come to the League to the effect that child neglect is on the increase because of the increased employment of parents in defense industries and hence extensive facilities for day care are needed.

The purpose of this article is not merely to emphasize the dire need that now exists in many parts of the country, but also, and even more important, to inform all who read these lines that a substantial method of stemming the tide of neglect, delinquency, and of maternal and child health problems is at hand. This step in the direction of a constructive solution lies in a bill recently introduced in both the Senate and the House, where it was sent by the President with a personal letter to the Chairmen of Senate and House Committees.

The bill authorizes Congress to provide additional funds *as needed* under Title V of the Social Security Act. The bill does not in any way change the operation or the basic purposes, or any other aspect of Title V, except to lift the present ceiling and make it possible for the Congress to provide additional funds on a matching basis to those areas of the country where the need is greatest. The funds would provide additional child welfare workers to states where the need is particularly great. Such workers would work in connection with the United States Children's Bureau, but under the direct supervision of the state departments of child welfare.

The President and Executive Director of the League have given this bill the most careful study and consideration. It has seldom happened in the history of the League that board members have been asked to support specific legislation. This deviation from our general policy is due to the urgent need that exists and to the fact that the bill falls within the framework of an act which already has been approved by the people of this country and which has been of immeasurable value to the children of every state.

The House number of the bill is 7503 and the

Senate number is 2738. The bill is at present before the Ways and Means Committee of the House, of which Robert L. Doughton of North Carolina is the Chairman. Board members who wish to see a copy of the bill may write directly to the Child Welfare League of America, and those who are convinced that the bill has sufficient value to at least be considered should write or wire to Representative Robert L. Doughton, in care of Ways and Means Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, D. C., urging that hearings be held and that the Ways and Means Committee consider the bill at the earliest possible time. Here is a concrete answer for those who have concern for children and who are asking, "What can I do?"

—LEONARD W. MAYO, President

hours would, however, be a necessary part of a child care program in a community with employment hours such as are described above. Such a center, however, should be prepared to serve the evening meal as well as the one at noon.

In many communities where foster day care homes are not available and housekeeper service proves to be too expensive, the children's institutions and child placement agencies may be the solution when 24-hour care seems indicated. But it must be a truly flexible service, which places the conservation of family relationships above the convenience of management. Such a program would provide for daily visiting of parents, if desired, meals served to parents at moderate cost whenever they can be with their children, and visits home by the children whenever the parents have their days off. This would mean a new kind of institution program completely geared to the objective of the preservation of family relationships.

Where the community has a well-established foster boarding program, this service may well be expanded to meet some of the needs of children of employed mothers on a 24-hour basis. As in institutional care, this service must also be flexible and every effort must be made to preserve family ties.

#### *Care of the School-Age Child*

Many communities are considering the need for the care of children of employed mothers as if it concerned pre-school children only. However, some of the most serious consequences of inadequate care will arise as the result of lack of supervision of older children. Generally, clubs, churches, recreation centers, etc., have not been set up on the basis of a complete and continuous program for after-school supervision. Clubs have met a couple of times a week only and then only for short periods of time. Serious situations leading to delinquency have already developed because children have had no place to spend their early evening hours when parents are employed. The schools of a community might well take leadership in this program both within school hours and outside. In many rural communities the school plant is the only building offering facilities for large scale activities.

#### *Volunteers Need Training*

The fourth job of a local child care committee as outlined earlier in this paper is the selection, training, and assignment of volunteers for work in child care. Volunteers will be needed in such child care activities as child health clinics, children's hospitals, day nurseries, nursery schools, and recreational and after-

school activities. Volunteers should be carefully selected and trained. In selecting volunteers, it is important to have them interviewed by persons trained in interviewing (who may themselves be volunteers or loaned by social work agencies in the community). The interviewers should understand the type of workers needed and the types of services which the volunteers will be required to perform. Needless to say, volunteers should be well balanced individuals who have the ability to work with children. It is important that the training given the volunteers as child care aides should be adapted to local programs and resources as well as to the needs of the volunteers. It should provide for observation and for some actual experience under supervision. It should be remembered, however, that unless volunteers have had professional experience or training, they should be used as assistants to the regular staff and not as substitutes in positions requiring professional skills.

To sum up, then, the planning of a program of care for children of employed mothers must be done on an individual community basis. The fundamental needs of children must be borne in mind, but how they are to be met will be a matter for each community to work out on the basis of its resources and local situations. Unless the plan is geared to the hours of work of employed mothers, it will not meet the situation and neglect and delinquency will result. An adequate plan will involve the use of as many types of care as are required to meet the varying situations of the employed mothers and no one type or facility can meet all the situations. Only as communities realize the serious threat to the welfare of the future generation and resolve to co-ordinate all their resources to protect children, can the hazards be lessened. This crisis calls for the highest kind of co-operation, co-ordination, and planning on the part of everyone in the community.

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### Regional Conferences of Child Welfare League of America

The Southwest Regional Conference will be held November 12, 13 and 14, 1942, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Mrs. Bonnie McAntire is General Chairman, Miss Laura E. Dester, Program Chairman.

The Southern Regional Conference will be held November 17, 18 and 19, 1942, in Savannah, Georgia. Miss Florence van Sickler is General Chairman, Mrs. Loomis Logan Colcord, Program Chairman, and Mrs. Alvise Sharpe, Institute Chairman.

### Recent Development in Home Finding

(Continued from page 5)

in a foster home with another foster child, but she will recognize the child who has been so hurt that he cannot live in such a competitive situation. While she will be remembering that a child must be helped to accept the realities of life, she will also know the child for whom some realities are temporarily or permanently not bearable. Placements doomed to failure will be carefully avoided in the interests of the child and of the placement service.

Furthermore, some case workers have come to see that a child may break up what was thought to be the best placement through his inability to carry his share of the responsibility for making a go of the placement. At times, forbearance and endurance beyond the capacity of the particular, or of any, foster family was expected. Children were frequently replaced and homes lost without benefit to the child. In our more conscious use of the foster home program, a child may be helped through facing not only what he may expect to get, but what he will be expected to give. He may for the first time be experiencing a sense of his own value through the consciousness that what he has to contribute is wanted.

Equally important with reevaluating our criteria and our use of foster homes is the process of home finding. Despite the dearth of homes, some agencies leave to the prospective foster parents the major responsibility for following up their applications. They have interpreted persistence and willingness to wait indefinitely as an indication of the families' real interest in becoming foster parents, and as an indication of "tolerance and flexibility" so necessary in foster parents. In the past, appeals for homes to active foster parents, our best source still, frequently brought the reply, "But you have not yet visited the family I referred to you last month." One of our members informs us that they have experimented during the past few months with setting immediate dates for first and subsequent interviews both in the office and at the home of the applicant. This has given applicants a feeling of their value to the service, and a respect for the serious and responsible way in which the agency is going about making certain that the needs of both the foster family and the child to be placed will be served.

Another important aspect of home finding has been the board rate. In a recent study made by the League

some agencies wrote that they are not interested in foster families that want the child for money. Today, with increased opportunities for earning money out of the home, it may be seen more clearly that even those applicants who state definitely their wish to make some money must have other motives for finding this particular way of earning some money. It makes it necessary in home finding to understand that motive, to make sure that it is a motive that is consistent with allowing sufficient freedom for a child to grow and respect the parent of that child so that the child-parent relationship may develop. The validity of the money motive, too, must be accepted. If we are to have adequate and sufficient foster homes, we will need to examine the board rates that are paid and see where they must be changed to meet the increasing costs of living, though no foster parent expects to compete in earnings with a person in industry. This becomes increasingly valid as more and more children are placed whose own parents are working and will continue to be an interested factor in their lives. The increased request for service from families where both the parents are working, or from mothers now finding jobs, some of whom are able to pay at least in part for the care of their children, is creating an additional problem. One of our agencies writes us that they are losing some foster homes because "when parents begin to earn more money, foster parents expect that parent to become more adequate and to take the children home. It becomes increasingly difficult when the own parent earns more money than the foster parent." During the depression social workers had ample evidence of the psychological meaning of the ability to earn money. "I can't be much," or "what good am I, since I can't find a job," now in reverse, appears as, "You have a job, you are earning money, you should be an adequate parent." If we recognize now that many of the working parents need this service to prevent delinquency among their children, then home finding and study and preparation for use must include preparation of the foster parents for acceptance of these working parents, and must pave the way for the agency's continued role in such foster homes. The foster parent will need to respect the agency's right to take responsibility for making the placement service available to those families who should have it.

As agencies review their home finding practices, can they ask themselves some of these questions? Are we helping applicants know that they are really wanted and important to that service? In rejecting applicants, are we helping them know that they cannot be used so that as often as possible our rejection

is equally their withdrawal? Are we expediting our foster home studies? Are we carefully analyzing the use that the homes can best be put to, so that they may not be lost through misuse? Can we face the fact that, while we are looking for substitute parents for our children, our age-old feeling about "mothering" children will not confuse the reality about the foster parent's need to be paid for this service?

And in the interests of sufficient homes to work with, will we re-examine the standards, the criteria in home finding, and be ready to modify them realistically in terms of the community situation while we respect the individual needs of each child? Can we recognize that the standards of care that we give to children in foster families cannot be much different from the standards of care that we have for all children in the community? That the important thing for the placed child is that those charged with his care should not be satisfied with less for him than for his more fortunate playmate living with his own parents.

## BOOK NOTES

*How to RAISE MONEY*, Charles W. Gamble in collaboration with Winona W. Gamble, Association Press, New York, 257 pp. \$3.00.

Any person who carries responsibility for raising money in these times will find this book especially helpful. It is practically a manual of campaign technique dealing with various types of fund-raising activities and packed with sound information based upon the experience of not only one person, but of several successful money raisers. Whether your concern is a hospital, community chest, club or a private welfare organization, you find here plans and methods, tested and tried, down to such details as organization structure and printed forms to be used.

Other observations and counsel obviously stem from long experience. For example, in discussing the value of personal calls on prospects in relation to results obtained by telephone or letters, Mr. Gamble says: "In spite of the efficiency of the telephone and ease with which contact can be made, this method is not nearly so effective as a personal interview. The opportunity to chat informally and leisurely, so that the solicitor can watch the face and observe the immediate reaction of his prospect, cannot be overestimated. Actual studies made on letter appeals of the most successful type prove that the personal conference is at least four times as effective as the best letter."

We need to be quite mindful of the fact that we are operating in a period of rapid change, consequently trends in giving must be thoroughly studied. He points out that while "there may be an irresistible trend to reduce the size of individual fortunes, there is an equally irresistible force at work increasing our social sensitiveness." There is an optimistic note in the prediction that we may anticipate a flow of ever increasing gifts, but in smaller individual amounts than in the past.

The 257 pages are packed with stimulating material for the beginner and against which an old campaigner may derive not only inspiration, but put his own experience to a profitable test.

—ERNEST H. COLE

*Extension Secretary, Child Welfare League of America*

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS. By Ada Hart Arlitt. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1942, 261 pp. \$2.50.

The title of this book and the author's statement that it is based on over 4,000 case studies collected since 1925 at the Consultation Center conducted in the Department of Child Care and Training at the University of Cincinnati, lead one to approach it expectantly.

The social worker will be gratified by the author's persistent emphasis on feelings as the focal consideration in marriage whether one is a participant or observer.

The effective elaboration of this point of view is in itself a significant task, and one which alone makes the book interesting reading. But the social worker requires more. Specifically, he desires to proceed from general statements of a point of view to an understanding of the dynamics of individual participation in family relationships. This book unhappily contributes little to such understanding. The author repeatedly makes observations on aspects of family relationships which precipitate the social work orientated reader to think of the motivations involved, and then he finds himself alone—Mrs. Arlitt having gone on to another point. Part of this is related to a conscious choice by the author to deal with an accounting of factors involved in family relationships rather than with the delineation of motivations underlying those relationships. In the author's thinking and method this approach appears to be associated with a marked reliance on conscious intelligence as the effective means of influencing behavior. At any rate, little cognizance is given to those irrational

elements in behavior that are so common in the experience of the social worker.

Doubtless, these inadequacies of the book for the social worker are to some extent a consequence of its having been written for use by "college students interested in the study of the home and family life from a psychological point of view." The popularized style and organization of the book should make it attractive to college students.

Especially commendable are discussions of the advantages of family life, the gratifications and responsibilities of having children, and the impact of social and economic change on family life. Adoption of a child is mentioned as a resource for the childless couple, but there is no indication as to how adoptive children are to be obtained.

To this reviewer the book has several serious defects even when considered as a general introduction to family relationships for the college junior or senior. One of these is the tendency of generalized observations to appear as dogmatic, universally applicable statements of fact. Such statements avoid the discomfort of acknowledging multiple causation but run the risk of inaccuracy and misunderstanding. Also there is the repeated practice of attributing rather specific points of view to sociologists, psychologists, and psychiatrists as though each represented a coherent group of persons having the same measure of competence and experiencing unanimity of thinking. The social worker can testify to the unsoundness of saying "psychiatrists hold" or "psychologists agree."

Finally the author's discussion of the development of emotional life in infancy and childhood impresses the reviewer as somewhat mechanical and confusing. The author's view combines some widely accepted theory, such as, "all love responses are developed in connection with feeding and the general physical care the child receives," with a questionable "stages of development" scheme in which the stages seem to begin and end primarily by a time table.

In this book Mrs. Arlitt has described calmly but with conviction contemporary middle class American family life as she sees it. Like any other artistic production, the description is uneven in detail and emphasis and reflects the author's bias. The total impression is that of the importance of family relationships to the individual and to society—the ultimate Shangri-La of strength for individual growth and rehabilitation.

—JOHN A. REIMERS

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